

Message Text

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PAGE 01 PRETOR 04263 251834Z
ACTION IO-14

INFO OCT-01 AF-10 EUR-12 ISO-00 VO-05 SS-15 CPR-03
CA-01 PA-01 SY-05 USSS-00 FBIE-00 CIAE-00 INR-10
NSAE-00 OIC-02 ICAE-00 NSCE-00 SSO-00 INRE-00
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O P 251815Z JUL 78
FM AMEMBASSY PRETORIA
TO SECSTATE WASHDC NIACT IMMEDIATE 1875
USMISSION USUN NEW YORK NIACT IMMEDIATE
INFO AMEMBASSY BONN IMMEDIATE
AMEMBASSY DAR ES SALAAM IMMEDIATE
AMEMBASSY GABORONE PRIORITY
AMEMBASSY LAGOS IMMEDIATE
AMEMBASSY LONDON IMMEDIATE
AMEMBASSY LUSAKA
AMEMBASSY MAPUTO
AMEMBASSY OTTAWA IMMEDIATE
AMEMBASSY PARIS IMMEDIATE

C O N F I D E N T I A L PRETORIA 4263

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PORG, UNSC, SF, WA
SUBJECT: NAMIBIA: BOTHA DEPARTS FOR NEW YORK

REF: PRETORIA 4238

1. FOREIGN MINISTER BOTHA, ACCOMPANIED BY BRAND FOURIE, NEIL VAN HEERDEN, JOHN VIAL, AND HENNIE DE KLERK DEPARTED PRETORIA 1800 JULY 25 FOR LONDON AND WILL BE ARRIVING IN NEW YORK VIA PAN AM FLIGHT 101 AT 1335 JULY 26. TIPPED OFF BY CALL FROM IO (HELMAN) AND WORD FROM BRITISH FCO, BRITISH AMBASSADOR SCOTT AND I WENT TO JAN SMUTS AIRPORT TO SEE THE FOREIGN MINISTER OFF.

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PAGE 02 PRETOR 04263 251834Z

2. VAN HEERDEN TOLD SCOTT WHILE WE WERE WAITING THAT THE CONTACT GROUP'S MESSAGE OF JULY 24 (PRETORIA 4219) HAD HAD A BENEFICIAL EFFECT AND THAT THE SITUATION LOOKED BETTER THAN ONE COULD HAVE IMAGINED YESTERDAY. HE TOLD ME THAT WHILE MUCH STILL DEPENDED ON HOW THINGS WENT IN NEW YORK, HE THOUGHT WE WERE CURRENTLY IN A TROUGH AND THAT EVENTUALLY WALVIS BAY WOULD PROVE TO BE A NONISSUE FOR ALL CONCERNED. I SAID THAT WAS

EXACTLY WHAT WE THOUGHT. HE ALSO SAID THE CONVERSATION BETWEEN THE MINISTER AND SECRETARY VANCE HAD BEEN VERY USEFUL.

3. BOTHA ARRIVED AT THE AIRPORT JUST IN TIME FOR A PRESS CONFERENCE DURING WHICH HE MENTIONED INTER ALIA THAT HIS DECISION TO GO TO THE UN HAD BEEN INFLUENCED BY THE RECEIPT OF A "HELPFUL MESSAGE" FROM THE FIVE WESTERN POWERS. WHEN ASKED IF THE WESTERN FIVE WOULD STILL "INTRODUCE" A RESOLUTION ON WALVIS BAY, HE EXPLAINED HIS UNDERSTANDING THAT THE WALVIS BAY RESOLUTION WAS NOT BEING INTRODUCED BY THE FIVE BUT THAT THEY HAD INDICATED THEY WOULD SUPPORT IT. HE DECLINED TO SPECIFY WHAT HIS OWN PLAN OF ACTION WOULD BE IF RESOLUTION WERE PRESENTED.

4. PRESS CONFERENCE WAS TERMINATED EARLY BY CALL FROM PRIME MINISTER WHICH BOTHA APPARENTLY HAD TROUBLE RETURNING. (VORSTER LITERALLY OPERATES FROM A RURAL PARTY LINE WHEN VACATIONING ON HIS FARM.) LATER, AS HE DASHED FOR THE PLANE, BOTHA COMMENTED TO SCOTT AND ME THAT THERE HAD ALMOST BEEN A "LAST MINUTE HITCH" BUT DID NOT EXPLAIN.

5. BRAND FOURIE, WHO LAST NIGHT MENTIONED HAVING HEARD NEWS AGENCY STORY FROM NEW YORK THAT SOUTH AFRICA WAS ONLY "AHADOW-BOXING," ASKED ME IF IT WAS TRUE AS ONE REPORTER HAD TOLD HIM THAT DON MCHENRY HAD MADE SUCH A COMMENT. I SAID I HAD NEVER HEARD THE STORY EXCEPT FROM FOURIE, BUT ADDED THAT MCHENRY HAD ENDORSED MY OWN POLICY OF NOT COMMENTING TO THE PRESS, EVEN CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 03 PRETOR 04263 251834Z

ON SOME OF THE WILD STORIES ONE HEARD.

5. AS WE LEFT SCOTT TOLD ME HE HAD RECEIVED A MESSAGE FROM CALLAHAN FOR VORSTER AND, ON INSTRUCTIONS HAD ASKED FOURIE WHETHER HE SHOULD GO AHEAD WITH THE DELIVERY OR HOLD UP. FOURIE RESPONDED THAT HE THOUGHT THEY HAD ENOUGH FOR AWHILE AND IT WOULD BE BETTER TO HOLD IT, WHICH SCOTT IS REPORTING TO LONDON.

6. OVER TO NEW YORK.
EDMONDSON

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 jan 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: MEETING DELEGATIONS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 25 jul 1978
Decaption Date: 01 jan 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 20 Mar 2014
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1978PRETOR04263
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Expiration:
Film Number: D780305-0224
Format: TEL
From: PRETORIA
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1978/newtext/t19780723/aaaaatcc.tel
Line Count: 105
Litigation Code IDs:
Litigation Codes:
Litigation History:
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Message ID: 3eb4676d-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Office: ACTION IO
Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 2
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: 78 PRETORIA 4238
Retention: 0
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 27 apr 2005
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review Media Identifier:
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
SAS ID: 1894563
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: NAMIBIA: BOTHA DEPARTS FOR NEW YORK
TAGS: PORG, SF, WA, UNSC, (BOTHA, PIK)
To: STATE USUN NEW YORK
Type: TE
vdkgvwkey: odb://SAS/SAS.dbo.SAS_Docs/3eb4676d-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Review Markings:
Sheryl P. Walter
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
20 Mar 2014
Markings: Sheryl P. Walter Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 20 Mar 2014